

Black Feather

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Summary: Hinata picks up an odd volleyball that has a single drawing of a black feather. Chances are, it's not a normal ball. Taking place before Hinata attends Karasuno High School. Rated T to be safe.

One-shot.

Black Feather

I've only seen the anime and not the manga, so some details might be wrong. Hinata is a bit OOC here... maybe a lot.

This fanfiction takes place after Hinata graduated from junior high and before he started attending Karasuno High School.

I do not own Haikyu!

* * *

><p>A boy was sprawled on the ground, panting. He looked around and saw his water bottle standing near his head. He tried to heave himself up, but promptly fell on his back again. He wasn't exasperated, or frustrated.</p>

Simply tired.

Hinata Shoyo wiped the sweat from his forehead and stared straight up at the sky. The sun was setting, and the early spring evening was chilly. Ever since graduating junior high, all he had done was practice. Practice on a women's team, practice with his friends, practice alone... Not a single day had gone without spiking a ball on a building wall. The ball that had endured another day with him was now sitting silently next to his bag.

After regaining a bit of strength, Hinata pulled himself up and grabbed the bottle. His arms were strained from so much practice that they were shaking a lot. Spilling half the contents on his already sweat-drenched shirt, he drained the bottle. Chuckling, he aimed and

threw the bottle at his bag on the bench, which missed and fell clattering on the brick sidewalk.

He lied down on the ground again - the bottle could wait. He gathered his arms and aimed a receiving pose at the sky, imagining that one of the small specks up there was a volleyball sent by an opponent far away. Concentrating, he pictured a ball flying towards him, getting larger...

SMACK

Something landed square on his face and bounced off. Hinata howled in pain as he scrambled to get up, forgetting how tired he was. He rubbed his cheeks and nose - fortunately, nothing seemed broken. He then looked wildly for the thing that hit him.

A volleyball rolled beneath the bench. Muttering a few swear words, Hinata crawled and brought the ball out.

It looked very battered and had so many scratches. Also, the once-white skin was rather dirty and started to discolor. At first glance it looked like an old volleyball. However, there was a single black feather picture which was unscathed, and even glossy.

Hinata glanced around. Maybe someone sent their volleyball in the wrong direction?

"Hello? Hey, I got your volleyball." Hinata yelled.

Short echoes of his voice told him the area was completely deserted. Shrugging, he got up and placed the ball on the bench. Whoever owns it would come looking for it. He then started packing his bag, picking up the water bottle lying on the ground, and his own volleyball. The sky became dark enough for the specks in the sky to be bright. He should go home.

He had only taken a few steps before hearing a light thud and crackling sand. The odd volleyball rolled and bumped into his shoes. Hinata was sure he had placed the volleyball on the bench, and it didn't fall before. Hinata put his volleyball in his bag before picking up the odd one.

The black feather looked almost too new to be true. Maybe it was a sticker? Hinata tried scratching at it, but unlike the rest of the volleyball skin, the feather printing was very smooth that his fingernails slipped. He looked for a brand name but there was nothing. No words - nothing about the company that made it, nothing about when it was made, nothing about what it was made of. The black feather was everything.

It looked so pretty.

Hinata glanced around once again. It wasn't stealing, was it? It was a lost volleyball that he picked up where nobody was around. He would come back tomorrow with the ball.

* * *

><p>No matter how much he scrubbed the volleyball with a rag, it just didn't get clean. Only the feather seemed to get polished with every

wife. Hinata placed the ball on his desk, and stared at the feather, admiring how detailed the features were.<p>

It almost looked as if a real feather was plucked from a crow and stained the ball. He ran his fingers over the feather again and again until he fell asleep at his desk.

So bright.

So loud.

Hinata shielded his eyes from the light pouring down on him. Cheers came from every direction, and it was deafening.

A boy stood in front of him, his back to Hinata. He turned his head slightly as if acknowledging the stunned boy behind him.

He smiled.

Beautiful.

Hinata reached out, opening his mouth to call the boy, but no sound came.

The boy ran.

He jumped.

Large black wings sprouted from his back the moment his feet left the ground, flapping and carrying the boy higher and higher.

Hinata watched in excitement as the boy swung down his arm...

...and Hinata crashed to the floor, his own arms flailing. He struggled with the chair before standing up. Despite the fact it was 3 in the morning, Hinata was wide awake. His heart pounded as if he just played a harsh match, and he was sweating.

The volleyball was sitting innocently on his desk. He picked it up and rubbed the feather printing.

It felt weird rubbing a volleyball for no reason at 3 in the morning.

But Hinata didn't dislike it. If... if the owner didn't show up when he went to practice, he would keep it. He climbed into bed, and once again fell asleep while staring at the volleyball...

Hinata spent the rest of the night dreaming of dancing candies and sweet bread. He almost threw the alarm clock out of disappointment when he got up for breakfast.

* * *

><p>The place where he usually practiced was empty again. This time, instead of his usual ball, Hinata brought the volleyball he picked up some hours ago. He carefully tossed it in the air before spiking it.<p>

The ball was surprisingly soft, and it bounced with incredible speed that Hinata barely caught it. He tried once again, and this time he missed, sending the ball rolling far away across the ground.

For the first time, he was glad nobody was around.

He spent the next hours practicing against the building wall. Tossing, receiving, spiking - everything went smoothly with this volleyball. It was as if his skills were enhanced by a few levels, and he was having so much fun. He didn't even feel tired.

If he could have done just like this, maybe he could have won against Kageyama months ago. He felt bitter at the memory of his suffering loss - how the match ended one-sidedly against the King of the Court. He would be attending Karasuno High School soon. He'd join the volleyball club and get his revenge during matches.

Until then, he'll have to practice. Get stronger, get faster, and jump higher. He threw the ball and went after it, feeling his reflexes grow sharper. He followed the trail of the feather, and stretched out his hand, feeling the smooth surface of the printing with his palm. Normally, his hands would turn red and sore from too much spiking, but his hand felt perfectly okay, almost unaffected. Maybe it was because of the soft ball skin.

He practiced until it got dark, feeling less tired than the day before. Maybe he was improving. Maybe he was getting stronger.

* * *

><p>Hinata lied down on his bed, tossing the volleyball above his head before clutching it, and hugging it. He fingered the feather printing aimlessly before drifting off to sleep...</p>

_Hinata winced. _

The boy was in front of him again, this time reaching out to touch Hinata's cheek.

His fingers were so firm. Not warm, not cold, but steady and rigid.

_You, Hinata started. _

The boy nodded.

Watch me, he said.

Hinata wanted to grasp the boy's hand, but he broke away.

The boy swiftly moved along the net.

Shadows were unable to keep up.

The boy flew.

Hinata stepped forward to take a good look at the soaring boy.

How could such a small build hold so much power.

So much energy.

Radiating, overwhelming, charisma.

He scored.

The boy fluttered to the floor gracefully, and a strong gust of wind whipped around the court as he folded his wings.

Hinata would give anything to be just like him...

* * *

><p>Hinata slept in. He was late for group practice. When he arrived at the gym, the ladies had already finished their warm-ups. After offering a quick apology, he joined in the friendly match they were about to have.</p>

He was going to show how much he improved. If only they had seen his movements yesterday! Maybe he should have brought his new ball to group practice - but no. He didn't want other people to touch it, which was why he didn't bring it in the first place.

"Shoya, pay attention!"

Hinata received the practice ball before rushing over to the net.

Thud, thud, thud...

The volleyball bounced on the floor. Hinata stopped in his tracks, staring at it roll away.

He reacted perfectly. His reflexes had always been good.

Then why had he not reached the ball in time?

"I - I'm sorry!" Hinata said to the confused women. They had never seen Hinata miss. "Maybe I need to warm-up..."

"Don't worry." One of them said kindly. "Take your time and do some stretching. Come back when you're ready."

Hinata nodded before heading over to a free space and starting stretching his arms.

After finishing the usual routine of warm-ups, he got a spare ball and tossed it up.

His arm swung in the air and mis-hit. The ball was already on the ground.

Panic shot through his head, but he shook it off. Maybe it was because he overslept. Maybe he was still half-asleep.

Or maybe the volleyball was stupid. Yeah, it had to be a poorly made volleyball.

He picked up another ball and aimed another spike.

He missed.

Telling himself that this ball was probably bad as well, he picked up the third ball.

He missed.

The fourth.

The ball hit the floor before he could even try hitting it.

The fifth, sixth, seventh...

Hinata tried picturing what he was like yesterday. How he was so fast, and how his body was so light. How he had no trouble practicing at all.

The eighth.

"Concentrate," he whispered. Maybe he was just having a really bad day.

Ninth.

"Shoya - " the women called him, but he didn't hear them.

Tenth. Hinata grit his teeth.

"Shoya!" One of them tapped his shoulder, looking concerned.

"Shoya, I think you need some rest." She said. "I'm sure you must have overworked yourself in the past few days. I know how enthusiastic you are about volleyball, but your body needs time to rest."

Yeah, that must be it. Maybe he was just too tired and didn't notice it. Apologizing for what seemed to be the third time for the day, Hinata left group practice early.

* * *

><p>The black wings were sleek and shiny.

Hinata wished he could have black wings, too.

Wings just like him.

The boy landed on the court after what seemed to be a streak of perfectly accurate spikes.

The boy's wings folded carefully when he walked.

_Hinata rushed out and grabbed the boy's arm. _

Just as the boy turned to look at him, the lights went out.

The cheers faded, and all that was left was silence.

_Only a glistening silhouette of the boy was visible. _

_Hinata felt firm hands on his cheek. _

Feathers ruffled, and before Hinata could react, he was in an embrace.

I can teach you to be like me, the boy whispered.

_Strong arms held him and pulled him closer....

* * *

><p>Hinata didn't care that he had spent the whole afternoon sleeping or that he had awoke in the middle of the night. The volleyball was comfortably placed in his arms under the covers. The black feather looking prettier than ever.</p>

He caressed the ball before placing his lips on the print. He wasn't surprised when it felt like the sensation in his dream.

Over the next few days, people started to notice Hinata change a bit. He only used one volleyball to practice and could only practice with that one. When given a different volleyball, he'd be unable to hit or toss. He never let the ball out of his sight even when he was eating lunch, and almost always kept it on his laps.

As if he was afraid to let go of the ball.

Sleeping in became a habit for Hinata. He had more dreams of the boy, and his interactions with him increased. Every dream felt like a bliss, and he was witnessing the most amazing matches. The boy, the wings, the incredible spike - all were beautiful. The boy would take Hinata and tuck him safely inside his wings.

Hinata didn't want the dreams to end. He was with him. The boy who made him fall in love with volleyball.

The boy who made him fall in love with him.

When he was awake, the black feather on the volleyball would remind him of his dreams. He pictured himself jumping high with wings, and swinging his arm, slamming his palm on the ball for a score. The boy would praise him, and reward him.

Hinata loved talking about volleyball.

He loved being close to the boy.

_He loved being enveloped in black wings. _

I want to jump high.

I want wings like you.

The boy would pull him closer, whispering his strength as his wings.

Ecstasy.

If only this could continue on..._

* * *

><p>Soon, there were only a few days left before Hinata would attend Karasuno High School. He decided to drop by the group practice and thank them for their help. He carried the volleyball with him as usual.</p>

He found the women gathered in front of a TV in the gym.

"Ah, Shoya!" They called him. "Come join us, you might like this!"

Curious, Hinata sat with the group and watched the screen. It was an old recording of Karasuno's match at the Inter-High.

"I was cleaning out the storage room, and I found several videos of high school competitions!" A woman said happily. "Those were good days..."

The boy from his dreams was also in the match. Hinata's eyes were glued to the screen as he was about to see again that moment when he jumps in the air -

there were no wings_

Hinata felt a cold shiver. There were no wings. No magnificent wings that soared.

"That really was the best of Karasuno," The women clapped. "Say, Shoya, you're attending Karasuno High School, right? You must be so proud of -" They turned to ask him, but realized he was gone.

Hinata felt betrayed. When he arrived at his usual training grounds, he angrily threw the ball at the building, which bounced back and rolled on the ground.

"Liar!" he screamed.

If someone looked at him from a distance, they would have thought that Hinata was crazy as he was screaming at a volleyball. However, he felt that he was going crazy. Where did the wings go? What happened?

What did it want from him?

The black feather offered no answer. Hinata could almost see the boy beckoning him to pick him up, see each other again in his dreams.

I can give you wings._

The offer sounded tempting.

Hinata wished he could go to sleep and never wake up.

But what if he did?

Was this really what he wanted?

Was this really what he wanted?

Hinata left the ball as it is and turned around. He heard the sound of sand crackling, the ball rolling towards him.

He ran.

* * *

><p>Hinata returned home with red and puffy eyes. He felt weak. He felt miserable. Many times, he felt like going outside again.</p>

But instead, he went straight to bed.

He had a hard time falling asleep. He couldn't stop crying.

Was this a dream? Were these feelings all part of a dream?

Hinata clutched the bed sheets.

He wanted an answer...

So bright.

So loud.

Hinata shielded his eyes from the light pouring down on him. Cheers came from every direction, and it was deafening.

A boy stood in front of him, his back to Hinata. He turned his head slightly as if acknowledging the stunned boy behind him.

He smiled.

Beautiful, but sad.

Hinata reached out, opening his mouth to call the boy, but no sound came.

The boy ran.

He jumped.

The boy slammed down the ball and scored.

There were no wings. There were no shadows.

Teammates cheered with happiness as they ran on the court.

The boy came back to Hinata.

Even without wings, the boy was beautiful.

Hinata cried.

What would I do now, without your wings?

The boy only left Hinata a lingering sensation on his lips.

There's no need for wings.

* * *

><p>Hinata got up, his eyes still red from crying in his sleep. He opened the door to find his mother startled to see him when she was about to wake him up.<p>

School would start in two days.

Hinata returned home from shopping for school supplies. On his way back, he stopped by his usual training spot.

A black feather fluttered to the ground in front of him. Hinata stumbled backwards, but was relieved when he saw crows flying above him. He picked it up, and was glad to find the tip of the feather rough. He put it back down.

The volleyball itself was gone. He aimed a receiving pose at the stars. Nothing fell down.

* * *

><p>Hinata spent the last day of his break practicing with a regular volleyball.<p>

It took hours to finally make a hit, but he knew he was recovering.

He felt overly tired, and the moment he sprawled on the ground, he didn't want to lift a finger. But Hinata appreciated the muscle strain, and the chilly spring breeze. He would spill his water again, but he knew he wouldn't mind.

He knew one by one, he would turn back to his usual self again.

He would go to Karasuno High School, and join the volleyball club. He would beat Kageyama some day.

There was no need to seek wings anymore.

Little did he know what he would face the very next day...

* * *

><p>THE END<p>

* * *

><p>Author's Note: I read the whole story again, and I realized Hinata became a bit more OOC than intended. Still, this is the one-shot I had in mind, so reviews would be welcome :)<p>

End
file.